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The Impact of the “Spirit of Capitalism” Phenomenon on the Development of Contemporary Ukrainian Society

Abstract

The Revolution of Dignity or Euromaidan should be the starting point for a strong modernization of public life in Ukraine. The participants of these violent events hoped to speed up economic reforms and the processes leading to the welfare of Ukrainian people. However, the situation remains very difficult. The causes of slow transformations lie in the psychological as well as in the historical plane.

The study is based on the idea of Max Weber's "spirit of capitalism". The article analyzes the influence of religious factors on the formation of Ukrainian economic competence since the nineteenth century (the era of the industrial revolution in the Ukrainian lands). The application of retrospective analysis allowed to highlight and study the factors of negative impact on business development, cooperation and private initiatives at the time of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. These complex internal and external factors contribute their influence in the independent Ukraine. The educational system and mass media do not pay enough attention to the analysis and solving of these issues.

Understanding the features, advantages and disadvantages of the capitalist system would allow residents of Ukraine to find better solutions to their own economic problems. The ideas of the post-industrial economy are not highly supported by today's society because its members are still captured by old stereotypes. Overcoming of the negative stereotypes can be realised by the qualitative development of the new approaches to economic education and economic literacy in the civil society as well as by support of the private initiatives (presented by the non-governmental institutions).

Keywords: Revolution of Dignity, "spirit of capitalism", economic competences.

Introduction

In modern Ukraine, economic and political problems were caused not only by the domestic politicians, but also they were influenced by the "spiritual heritage" of the Russian Empire and the USSR. For 25 years of independence, the country's citizens could not learn to be active and responsible in their self-education and business. "Spirit of capitalism" has affected a very limited number of people. Historical factors, mentality and lack of targeted policies have impeded the formation of economic competence. The educational system and mass media has not influenced effectively in this area.

The events of the Revolution of Dignity have initiated changes in self-awareness. However, economic competence is beyond the scope of interest in the educational system, public policy and private initiatives. An urgent problem of modern Ukrainian economy's progress is readiness of young people to be masters of their life, of their individual development as well as career building.

One of the most important factors of Ukrainian young people's economic self-consciousness development is their understanding and positive attitude to the "spirit of capitalism". Development of the "spirit of capitalism" as an important mental phenomenon of modern Ukrainian young people's consciousness has caused an increase in their responsibility for the own professional career, readiness to work hard in order to get promoted as well as to look for and to find their own unique ways for professional self-realization. But despite positive attitude of many Ukrainian students to European integration process and the European values, including economic ones, some old post-Soviet stereotypes impede the development of the "spirit of capitalism" as an important personal quality of modern Ukrainian students.

1. The historical aspect of the "spirit of capitalism" phenomenon

The Revolution of Dignity or Euromaidan should be the starting point for a strong modernization of public life in Ukraine. The participants of these violent events hoped to speed up economic reforms and the processes leading to the welfare of Ukrainian people. However, the situation remains very difficult. The causes of slow transformations lie in the psychological as well as in the historical plane. During the period of the late 19th – early 21st century Ukrainian state experienced a tumultuous revolution. However, according to historian C. Kulchytsky, such events have only created conditions for long-term transformation process (Kulchytsky 2005: 45–46).

The study of these processes is based on the retrospective analysis of the "spirit of capitalism" impact on the formation of economic thinking and social consciousness. Various factors determine the Ukrainian mentality. However, most scholars studied political factors. But religious teachings, the official ideology of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union as well as the modern information policy have created a set of instruments that allow to manipulate public opinion and influence an average Ukrainian.

M. Weber was one of the first scholars who analyzed the influence of the religious factors on the economic development (Weber 1968:15). However, such scientific works were real rare in Ukraine for a long time. This can be explained by the conservatism of the Orthodox Church and the corresponding state policy of the Russian Empire and the USSR. Also, the works of Weber did not have adequate translation into Ukrainian. Therefore, modern Ukrainian scholars began to familiarize themselves with the "The Protestant Ethic" at the end of 20th century only.

In Western Europe, the content of the "The Protestant Ethic" caused lively debate during the life of M. Weber. The M. Weber's ideas gained recognition in American sociology - especially among supporters of the functionalism and the "theory of conflict" (Pogorilyi 1994: 16). Conclusions of the M. Weber's works became the impetus for a new research of the rationalization processes in various areas of public life. Especially nowadays research interest is growing in the field of sociology for the issues of the Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Judaism religions' influence on the economy (Pogorilyi 1994: 15).

A. Pogorilyi, the author of the foreword to the Ukrainian edition of the M. Weber's work, emphasizes that (...) *sociologist focused on the analysis of economic differences between the ascetic Protestantism and the Orthodox views* (Pogorilyi, 1994: 16-18). But the last were not studied sufficiently. M. Weber intended to fully examine the influence of the Eastern Christianity ethics on the economic development. But his untimely death prevented the realisation of these plans. M. Weber probably thought that the impact of Catholics and Orthodox Christians on economic issues was strictly traditional.

Ukrainian religious scholars considered that the Orthodox anthropology was more optimistic than Calvinist ideas. A person did not seem to be a hopeless sinful creature, but an object of special "grace of God" (Pogorilyi 1994: 16-18). However, such an optimistic idea of human nature did not become an impetus to the economic and cultural transformations. The reason was that the Orthodox asceticism was still "outside world".

It is necessary to consider the historical factors. Acute and long religious struggle has intertwined with the problem of the national statehood

existence and respect for national identity. This was a defining matter of theological controversy. The important philosophical questions retained any area for arguments about behavior in economic, trade or business stimulus.

Of course, the ideas of the Reformation could not pass by the Ukrainian lands. In the first half of the 16th century the Lutheranism, Calvinism and Arianism spread considerably in Ukraine. Rationalistic views were popularized by the representatives of Judaism. Well-known educators also got acquainted with the ideas of Protestantism: K. Ostroghsky supported Evangelicals; I. Gisel was born in Calvinistic surrounding; F. Prokopovich was sympathetic to the Lutherans. New ideas of the Protestantism influenced the development of the Ukrainian national movement. According to the famous historian M. Hrushevsky: *Ukrainian ship full sailed through the wind of the Reformation. But the sail failed when the wind began to die down* (Hrushevsky 1962: 76).

The founder of modern Ukrainian literature I. Kotlyarevsky was also involved in the Evangelism as a management board member and a librarian of the Poltava Bible Society. At this time, the official Church was fully controlled by Moscow on the lands which belonged to the Russian Empire. The Church turned to the imperial state institution. Opposition figures referred to the national culture of the "free Evangelism" (Lytvynov 2008: 221).

But the interest of the progressive society sector did not become a powerful factor of social mentality. Religion and imperial ideology had a more effective means of influence. Sympathy to Protestants was considered as harmful and dangerous. Even in times of the economic reforms conservative Orthodox dogmas retained their dominant position (Maystrenko 2008:189).

All these features were clearly manifested in the 19th century, during the industrial revolution. Ukrainian lands kept the status of a raw appendage. Certain restrictions of the entrepreneurial initiative and business possibilities became the results of the colonial character of the Russian - Ukrainian relations. Even pro-governmental mass media drew attention to these important problems.

The publications in the mass media illustrated the result of the interaction between the religious factor and imperial policy. For example, the members of the Statistics Committee of Chernigov region analyzed Krolevets fair and defined its features. At the local fair producers presented their wares. But Russian producers were allowed to set cheaper prices.

The government of the Russian Empire supported the traders by using discriminatory laws. Russian merchants received the largest profits in regional fairs. Ukrainian traders were mainly engaged in the sale of raw

materials. This situation hampered the development of the industrial production and private initiative (Chernigov Provincial Gazette 1853: 14).

The Orthodox Church supported the imperial power. The religious factor worked to restrain the rising social tension. Ukrainian economic activity remained average. The policy of the Empire deterred the potential of the Ukrainian lands in their economic growth (Svystunov 2002: 68).

At the time of the Soviet Union the religious factor was replaced by a rigid ideological structure. Such features as entrepreneurship, leadership, commercial talent were considered negative. A Soviet citizen had to work productively within the system. The issue of labor employment was considered typical of the countries with command economies. The performance and quality of work were the priority for the government (Sokolova 2003: 145).

The worsening economic crisis prompted the Soviet government to implement reforms. In 1985 M. Gorbachev declared a course towards restructuring. But an Austrian researcher P. J. Boettke argued that Gorbachev's reforms had eventually failed due to the reason that they had not been based on a sound understanding of the market and political processes (Boettke 1993:15). The authorities and the citizens did not understand the features of the market economy. The changes were accompanied by fraud, theft of state property, new forms of economic crime. Such phenomena can be considered as a heritage of independent Ukraine.

M. Weber believed that the "spirit of capitalism" saved Europe. Consequently, a desire to work and as a result to make a fair living should have been a decisive factor in the development of Ukraine after 1991. However, negative factors formed in the course of previous historic periods did not lose their impact on today's society.

2. Ukraine after the Revolution of Dignity

The concept of the "spirit of capitalism" (competitive economy mindset) was first used in the works by M. Weber. Economic, cultural, religious aspects of this phenomenon were studied in the researches conducted by Ukrainian and foreign scholars. This term is more often used to describe personal traits and behavior of a modern person at the beginning of the 21st century.

According to V. Sikora, a "capitalist" in Ukrainian mentality means a person who obtains and increases riches for the sake of income itself (Sikora 2001). Thus, a person often obtains capital in dishonest or criminal ways. The scholar emphasized that the "spirit of capitalism" of a modern person must have other sense. The formation of the "spirit of capitalism" is

directed to increase the competitiveness of the country, the combination of both state and individual interests.

In the opinion of K. Voz'nyj, consciousness of people for a long time did not accept the capitalistic models of life in post-Soviet Ukraine (Voz'nyj 2009: 3-15). Insufficient legal protection of property, heavy taxes and other unfavorable factors considerably prevented from the development of small and medium-sized businesses. In consciousness of modern Ukrainians there is a stereotype that in order to get a large capital you must be a criminal. Therefore, a "capitalist" is often associated with negative personality traits of character: cunning, dishonesty.

K. Voz'nyj marked that social and political changes one could observe in a number of European countries, in particular Germany and Poland, were a reason for the fast-economic growth of these countries (Voz'nyj 2009: 3-15). However, a change of consciousness is a difficult and a long-term process. In particular, the important constituent of modern person's economic mentality is a willingness to work hard for the sake of bigger profit.

According to O. Bondarenko, mentality of the Ukrainians in times of the USSR was anti-business. Community sense prevailed above individual sense in consciousness of people (Bondarenko 2009:169). A desire of a person to have private property, own gains and desire to increase them were reprobated by society. Over recent years there have been considerable changes in consciousness of Ukrainians. An individual feels himself free in a free society. It assists modern Ukrainians to form their "spirit of capitalism". The "spirit of capitalism" includes the aspects of both spiritual and social life. Mental representations of the "spirit of capitalism" include its acceptance by people as the ideal of own spiritual growth and important priority of the state development. The social aspect of the "spirit of capitalism" creates certain images of a person who is in the process of constant personal and career development (Bondarenko 2009:171).

The research of educating the "spirit of capitalism" has a big significance for modern Ukrainians of the young age. Young people who took an active part in the Revolution of Dignity are developing modern Ukraine. However, until 2013 forming of the modern young generation's consciousness was influenced by modern European capitalist mentality and old post-Soviet stereotyped ideas about a capitalism as a negative phenomenon.

The "spirit of capitalism" is a new phenomenon in the Ukrainian social sciences, including such disciplines as psychology and pedagogy. Different aspects of the Ukrainian youth's economic consciousness are analyzed in modern Ukrainian psychology. But there are not any tests, any

questionnaires and other valid tools in the literature that allow to conduct researches of capitalist mentality. Hence, we have decided to prepare our unique methodology. To study the features of the capitalist mentality among modern Ukrainian students after the Revolution of Dignity we have elaborated a special questionnaire¹. It included 12 questions aimed to study ideas of the students about the “spirit of capitalism”, the capitalist mentality and their implementation in their own lives. The questionnaire included 2 blocks of questions, created for explore the students’ attitudes to capitalist mentality. The first block was aimed to study their approach to the capitalist mentality as a psychological and social phenomenon in general. The questions of the second block were devoted to the study of students’ attitude to the capitalist mentality in their own life.

3. Psychological aspects of the capitalist mentality among students

In our research of the young Ukrainians’ “spirit of capitalism” we have set following aims:

1. To define attitude of the Ukrainian students toward the “spirit of capitalism” in general and its value for the development of Ukraine;
2. To describe the ideas of students concerning the “spirit of capitalism” in their lives;
3. To compare influence of the profession choice and professional preparation on students’ attitude toward the “spirit of capitalism” (using the samples of students of the economic and pedagogical specialties).

40 students of prestige, economic specialties and 40 students of not so popular pedagogical specialties of different universities in Ukraine took part in the research. It was anonymous to provide freedom of self-presentation among students. The comparison of the questionnaire’s results educed interconnection of the chosen specialty and attitude toward the capitalist mentality among youth.

A presentation of the outcomes we would like to begin with the answers on the first question, which was formulated in the following manner: “How do you treat the capitalist mentality? What does the capitalist mentality mean in life of a modern person?”. The students of economic specialties answered that they had positive attitude to the capitalist mentality and could understand it as the special type of the person’s market economy mind-set. The market-economy mind-set is directed to the search of the best ways to meet human economic needs. In their opinion, the capitalist mentality is a

¹ We have used a questionnaire in our empirical research mainly because there are some advantages of this technique, especially in comparison with the classical psychological tests. These advantages include: less formality, opportunity to choose and answer, possibilities for respondents to present their own non-typical answers.

kind of understanding our own responsibility for the career and life in general, and for material well-being of the family too. It includes decent and honest work to build person's own career and achieve a material prosperity. All students from this group emphasized that the capitalist mentality is very important for a modern person, namely during the times of economic crisis in Ukraine. In turn, the ideas of students of the pedagogical specialties concerning the capitalist mentality were extremely unclear. In their opinion, this phenomenon is related to capitalists in Europe and issues of human exploitation. In general, most students spoke out about the “spirit of capitalism” as about a negative phenomenon. According to them, the “spirit of capitalism” makes the person's activity more complicated, it makes people feel passionate about leadership, careerism as well as competition with other people in order to have more material goods.

In the second question the subject of our interest was a potential contradiction between the capitalist mentality and human values. We formulated this problem in the following way: “In your opinion, does the spirit of capitalism contradict with the human values of a modern person? Please explain your answer”.

All students of economic specialties answered that the “spirit of capitalism” did not conflict with the human values of a modern person. There were the following answers among the students of pedagogical specialties:

- the “spirit of capitalism” conflicts with the human values of a person (34 students);
- the “spirit of capitalism” does not conflict with human values (6 students).

The third question of questionnaire was as follows: “How do you estimate the influence of the spirit of capitalism on the development of modern European countries?”. In opinion of students of economic specialties, the capitalist mentality helped in economic development of modern Europe. According to them, development of the “spirit of capitalism” assisted in creation of the new forms of economy, the new forms of industry and production of high-quality commodities and services in the European countries. Therefore, influence of the capitalist mentality on the development of the Western Europe had a positive effect.

The students of pedagogical specialties marked too that development of the market relations and the “spirit of capitalism” had assisted with economic success of the European countries. However, concentration on material values and underestimation of the spiritual ones led to other problems in these countries. The acts of terrorism, national and ethnic conflicts, insufficient attention to the own culture, history and traditions belong to such problems.

To clarify the students' answers about the "spirit of capitalism" we suggested to make a list of personal features of a person possessing the "spirit of capitalism" (question no.4). The students of economic specialties most often mentioned such features as entrepreneurship, leadership, aspiration to reach the professional heights, flexibility of thought and readiness to change a job to build a career, boldness, willingness to risk, readiness and desire to compete with other people. In the opinion of the students of pedagogical specialties, the "spirit of capitalism" includes boldness, strategic thinking, aspiration in life to be engaged only in a career, desire to earn much money in order to achieve material welfares (possibility to purchase a car, apartment etc.), and low personal interest in other spheres of life - communication, building of interpersonal relations, development of the spirituality.

Thus, the first questions of the questionnaire showed already that the influence of the Soviet stereotypes on the attitude toward the "spirit of capitalism" and economic constituent of the life in whole was much stronger expressed for the students of pedagogical specialties than for the students of economic specialties. However, the appropriate attitude toward the "spirit of capitalism" was more important in the case of students of pedagogical specialties. It is associated with the fact that teachers are responsible for popularization these values and attitudes among young Ukrainians. It seems possible that teachers' negative attitudes toward both "spirit of capitalism" as well as material values in general are some kind of psychological defense in reply to their own lack of economic protection.

The question no. 5 "Do you think there is a need for the spirit of capitalism in modern Ukraine after Revolution of Dignity?" was answered by the students of economic specialties in such a way that the "spirit of capitalism" is an important factor of the economic success of European countries. Acceptance of the European models of market economy, support and development of private business as major forms of the "spirit of capitalism" development in modern society will assist in stabilizing and strengthening of the Ukrainian economy.

The students of pedagogical specialties expressed ambiguous attitude toward this question. In their opinion, the "spirit of capitalism" assists in economic development of the country. However, educating the capitalist mentality can lead to even greater divisions between the rich and the poor, and it will intensify the problem of social inequality. Considerable development of the "spirit of capitalism" can also bring to the overconcentration of citizens' attention on the material aspects of life as well as to the decline of the level of "non-material" aspect of life in general.

To explore students' opinion about role and place of the "spirit of capitalism" in their own life we worked out the block of seven questions. The

first question from this block (no. 6, “What advantages and disadvantages will the spirit of capitalism bring you personally?”) was answered by the students of economic specialties in the following way: improvement of the time-management skills, increase in the level of the capacity and career success, forming of abilities to manage to do more in a short period of time and to be useful for the other people. Respondents from this group also added such disadvantages as the surplus orientation on professional activity, reduction of time spent for socializing with the family and friends.

The students of pedagogical specialties have marked the following basic advantages which a person forming capitalist mentality faces:

- It is inflexibility, ability not to care of the interests of other people. Ability to say "no" to other people;
- It is extending of possibilities to do a good career, to get promoted;
- It is a possibility to develop skills which will help solve different kinds of problems;
- It is an ability to find the alternative sources of profit, additional to the professional activity.

A question no.7 of the questionnaire ("How do you see successful professional career? How is the spirit of capitalism related to it?") was answered by the students of economic specialties in a positive way. All students of economic specialties are going to build a career in their profession. Thus 27 students polled see themselves in the future holding administrative positions of different industrial organizations and enterprises. Seven students are going to set up and develop their own businesses. Six students are going to combine professional activity in different organizations with a small private business. Thus, in opinion of the questionnaire participants, the “spirit of capitalism” will help them make successful careers, develop their personalities and implement their ideas in a profession.

Among the students of pedagogical specialties only 21 are going to work within their specialty during the period of their studying (if there is such an opportunity) or after graduating. They do not take into consideration the “spirit of capitalism” and do not think about the capitalist component of their job; in their opinion, the humanitarian ideas are on the first place – their self-development and education of children are a top priority. Their profession is extremely distant from the problems of development of the “spirit of capitalism”. Twelve of them emphasized that they consider work in their specialty as a temporary one. They are going to get the second higher education and change their professional jobs for other ones with higher salary. They developed the most positive attitude to the “spirit of capitalism” among all members of the group. The result shows that money remains an

important aspect for these respondents. Seven students from this group said they had a limited experience.

A question no.8 of the questionnaire was formulated in the following way: "What salary are you expecting to get after the graduation from the University working within the chosen specialty? Are you satisfied with it?". Students of economic specialties adequately estimate the prospects in their profession and expect already at the beginning of the career to get average or little more than an average salary in Ukraine. Students are also aware of the possible variants of career development within their profession and the prospects of professional height and labor payment they can receive in their jobs. The results of informal interview showed that these prospects of labor payment have met the economic needs of students, that brings to the increase in their satisfaction with their profession and positive attitude toward it.

The students of pedagogical specialties understand that their salary will be one of the smallest among different professions in the country and they are afflicted by this fact. However, they see considerable career prospects in their profession.

To clarify the results of the questionnaire questions no.9 "Are you ready enough and is it difficult to work for achievement of professional success"? and no.10 "Are you ready to dedicate your spare time including weekends to your work if it is necessary"? were asked. The outcomes of the analysis and generalization of students' answers to these questions enabled us to draw the conclusion that the students of economic specialties realized a necessity to make considerable efforts for their career advancement as well as for the development of the competitiveness. They emphasized that on the initial stages of their career they consider the further development of their qualification level as well as obtaining additional professional knowledge in their personal time, including weekends, as normal and necessary. However, the younger people of this group hope that after getting married they will be able to spend their free time together with their families.

In opinion of the students of pedagogical specialties, their work is emotionally difficult. Therefore, it will be difficult for them to make additional efforts for their professional self-development. Students find no sense in such activity, since it is extremely difficult to get promoted or develop a career in their specialty. The students prefer to spend their free time on their personal life, since their profession meets their economic necessities to the extremely small extent.

To present students' own initiatives as a factor of their professional success we offered a question no.11: "Would you like to set up your small business and to undertake responsibility for its success"? All students of economic specialties answered this question in the affirmative. Thirty-one of

them emphasized that at the beginning of the career they would like to earn a start-up capital in order to set up their business in future. For 12 students, the desired business is directly related to their profession. Answers of 19 students about the future private business were based on the successful examples of business leading by their friends or relatives, and on the aspiration to implement their hobbies and talents in career too.

Among the students of pedagogical specialties only 3 students answered that they would like to set up a private business such as kindergarten, and 4 students are going to organize different private groups and sections for children. More than 20 respondents of this group also would like to start a private business, however, they have a lack of confidence, they have fear of failure, they see private business as a very difficult and incomprehensible process for them.

A question no.12 of our questionnaire was following: "Do your affiliation (moral, religious, other) coincide with the spirit of capitalism or not? Please explain your answer". The students of economic specialties answered that their affiliations coincided with the "spirit of capitalism", since having high career prospects they will be able to bring more benefit not only to themselves but also to other people. In turn, the students of pedagogical specialties answered that their pictures of a high-spiritual, educated and intellectual person fully or partially differ from their pictures of the "spirit of capitalism". Christian affiliations of students, in their opinion, presuppose collaboration with other people and mutual help, but not rivalry and competition as constituents of the "spirit of capitalism".

Conclusions

In the historical retrospective view, there were different socio-political and economic processes which had an impact on Ukraine. Hence, a Ukrainian mentality has been formed by specific, political, social as well as cultural factors. There were religious determinants among them too. In contradiction to the Northern Europe described by M. Weber, in which Reformation played an important role in the process of modernization, the impact of Protestantism on the Ukrainian culture was weak. In Northern Europe, these denominations supported economic activity of citizens and oriented them toward material values. In turn, the Orthodox Church, supported by Russian authorities, popularized passivity among Ukrainians, obedience toward tsar and landlords, as well as oriented people toward non-material values. The same approach was demonstrated by Soviets. Their ideology based on the idea of state-dependent people. Citizens played those professional roles, which were necessary for the state at the moment. It did not motivate them to reach more. Therefore, these influences of both the

Orthodox Christian values as well as Soviet ideology are still visible in the contemporary Ukrainian mentality and in the Ukrainian approach to economic activity.

M. Weber tried to prove that the “spirit of capitalism” rescued Europe. He suggested too that this spirit was important part of European economic success. There is a need, then, for development of the “spirit of capitalism” in Ukraine, especially after Revolution of Dignity, which expressed some expectation of Ukrainians toward state, economy as well as integration of the country with Europe. In other words, there is a need for a drastic change of the youth’s attitude to their own life and career. However, strong influence of post-Soviet social stereotypes and low liability of Ukrainians could make these processes more complicated.

To explore this dilemma, we have conducted a research about attitudes of young Ukrainians to both the “spirit of capitalism” as well as its place in their life. The results of our study showed considerable distinctions between students of economic and pedagogical specialties. The students from the first group were more oriented toward material values. They accepted “spirit of capitalism” as well as intention of its introduction in their lives. Moreover, respondents from this group were interested in running business after graduation. In turn, students of pedagogical showed to a considerable extent the greater amount of stereotyped pictures of the studied phenomenon. The protracted influence of Soviet dogmas on the process of professional preparation of modern Ukrainian intelligentsia – future teachers – has resulted in an ambiguous attitude toward the “spirit of capitalism”. These students understand meaningfulness of the “spirit of capitalism” for the economic development of the country. However, at the individual level they consider aspiration to compete with other people, to get higher professional achievements, to make a rapid career as rather negative aspect of the phenomenon. The prospects of the professional activity suggest small optimism for them.

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„Duch kapitalizmu” a rozwój współczesnego społeczeństwa ukraińskiego

Streszczenie

Ukraińska Rewolucja Godności może stać się punktem wyjścia dla modernizacji kraju. Uczestnicy tych zdarzeń mieli bowiem nadzieję na przyspieszenie reform, które umożliwiłyby zbudowanie na Ukrainie zamożnego i stabilnego państwa. Możliwość realizacji tego celu pozostaje jednak niepewna, głównie ze względu na fakt, że niektóre z barier utrudniających modernizację są głęboko zakorzenione, mają psychologiczny i historyczny charakter.

Inspiracją dla rozważań podjętych w artykule stała się koncepcja sformułowana przez M. Webera, odnosząca się do potencjalnej zależności między etyką protestancką a rozwojem nowoczesnego kapitalizmu. Autorki swoją refleksję zaczynają od przedstawienia krajobrazu religijnego Ukrainy

w momencie, kiedy w Europie Północnej protestantyzm ugruntował już swą pozycję. Wskazują także, jak dominujący na ziemiach ukraińskich Kościół prawosławny, wspomagany przez władze carskie, wzmacniał wartości i postawy będące często w kontradykcji do tego, co M. Weber opisywał pod pojęciem „ducha kapitalizmu”. Zmiany w tym względzie nie zaszły wraz z pojawieniem się władzy radzieckiej. Więcej, obecne w przeszłości tendencje jeszcze bardziej uległy wzmocnieniu.

Na Ukrainie ukształtował się zatem taki system wartości i postaw, który nie sprzyja rozwojowi kapitalizmu. Czy Rewolucja Godności stanowi swego rodzaju próbę jego zmiany? Autorki, aby przekonać się o tym, na ile ów „duch kapitalizmu” jest obecny wśród młodych członków pokolenia Rewolucji, zrealizowały badanie, którego wyniki zostały przedstawione w niniejszym artykule. Ich zdaniem, w im większym stopniu ukraińskie społeczeństwo będzie w stanie odrzucić dawne stereotypy dotyczące działalności ekonomicznej, utrwalane przez władzę carską, a potem i radziecką, tym bardziej będzie ono w stanie zbudować nowoczesny porządek gospodarczy.

Słowa kluczowe: Rewolucja Godności, „duch kapitalizmu”, kompetencje ekonomiczne.